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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2007

In Today's Papers

Gul on the PKK, Possible Visit to Washington

Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul told mainstream Hurriyet that Turkey has asked the US to handover the PKK leaders Murat Karayilan and Cemil Bayik, but Americans said their priority was the confusion in Iraq, which prevents a division of troops from tackling the PKK problem. Gul said Turkey's expectation was the closure of PKK camps in Iraq, the arrest of terrorists sought by Interpol, and the cutting of financial sources of the terrorist organization. "Americans say they are not ready to meet Turkey's expectations in northern Iraq, and they feel ashamed," Gul emphasized. Gul also said he will visit Washington, without elaborating further. Hurriyet says the visit expected next month will be a crucial one in which all terror-related matters will be discussed, adding that if expectations are not met, Turkey will act on its own to handle the issue.

Struggle against the PKK

Hurriyet, Sabah, Radikal, and Zaman reported over the weekend that the Turkish special anti-terrorism envoy, retired general Edip Baser, responded to press questions in Istanbul with regard to a recent statement by Prime Minister Erdogan claiming no concrete outcome had been recorded in the fight against the PKK through the "special envoys" mechanism. "I don't know what the PM meant in that statement; I also don't know anything about the contents of the talks with Americans on terrorism. I won't quit my job, because I believe there are still things that I can do," said Baser. Baser noted his position as special envoy was in no way an obstacle for Turkey to launch military action, adding Turkey would do whatever it deemed necessary, including cross-border military incursions into northern Iraq.

Meanwhile, Monday's Zaman reports that according to the Turkish National Police, despite the ceasefire it announced in October, the PKK has launched 72 attacks since then, killing six troops, wounding another 32, whereas Turkish security forces killed 22 terrorists and

captured 266. Security forces also seized 218 bombs, 51.5 kg of C-4, 24.5 kg of A-4, 7.45 kg of TNT, and 3.86 kg of RDX explosives. Zaman also claims the Copenhagen-based Roj-TV has been used by the PKK to convey messages to its militants in Turkey and northern Iraq.

Editorial Commentary on Iraq

Gungor Mengi observes in the mass appeal Vatan that gaining control of oil is the real motives of the US in Iraq: "President Bush and supporters of the Iraq war were claiming that Iraq was on the verge of attacking the US with atomic bombs. The opponents were commenting that this was just a pretext for gaining control over the world's third most oil-rich country. The new law on Iraqi oil is just a clear indication of the naked truth. The details are very interesting if not sickening, and nobody can claim any more that America is not after an energy monopoly. The invasion of Iraq is actually not Washington's last adventure to gain control over Gulf oil. There will be more ahead. The Bush administration failed to keep its pledge of democracy for Iraqis, but at least there is now a gift for the American-British oil companies. The British Independent writes the recent oil law will strengthen the 'it was all about oil' argument. In fact the whole thing is like both Bush and Blair being caught red-handed, but it is unlikely that they will feel embarrassed."

Oral Calislar observes in Saturday's edition of the nationalist-leftist Cumhuriyet that a division of Iraq is unavoidable: "Saddam's execution sped up the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites, making it practically impossible for them to live under a united Iraq. The division of Iraq has become a de facto reality. On the other hand, Iraq's division will not be a good thing for US policy. Those who believe that the US policy is to divide Iraq eventually do not see the fact that a divided Iraq helps Iran get

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stronger, and does not help the US. The theory that the Sunni-Shiite conflict is part of a US plan does not have credence for me. Nevertheless Iraq is going through a division for sure. Turkey has been careful on the Iraq issue and took care to be seen as available to cooperate on Iraq's stability with the regional countries. The only exception on this very correct policy line is the Kurdish issue. When it comes to the Kurds, Turkey prefers to settle issues via the US. In fact, the US is incapable of solving its own problems in this region, let alone to help Turkey on the Kurds. Turkey should develop a bilateral and comprehensive relationship with the Kurds in the region to establish mutual trust and friendship. The solution is our job, not Washington's."

Lokmaci Overpass Crisis in TRNC

Weekend papers, all papers: Turkish Cypriot President Mehmet Ali Talat met with TGS chief Gen. Buyukanit and FM Gul in Ankara on Friday. Following his two hour meeting with FM Gul, Talat told reporters that "the TRNC decision to demolish the Lokmaci overpass is still relevant." Talat also dismissed press reports that Turkey's General Staff, which has around 40,000 soldiers in Cyprus to back the Turkish Cypriot state, was against his proposal. However, on Saturday, Gen. Buyukanit criticized TRNC President Talat's unilateral move to demolish bridge over Ledra, in order to open a new crossing with the Greek Cypriot administration, by saying "we are not against to the opening of Lokmaci gate. However, these kinds of steps should be mutual and concurrent with steps by Greek Cypriot side." Meanwhile, Greek Cypriot leader Papadopoulos said he is ready to demolish the wall in front of the National Guard observation post at Ledra within 24 hours, once necessary preconditions for the secure movement of people are fulfilled by the Turkish side. He described some of the preconditions as withdrawal of the Turkish troops from the region, the unmanning of the area, the restoration of adjacent buildings and the de-mining. Today's mornings TV newscasts report the scheduled meeting of Turkish and Greek Cypriot religious leaders meeting today for goodwill and unconditional inter-religious dialogue between the two communities has been cancelled.

Armenian Genocide Resolution

Hurriyet and Milliyet: In an interview with Milliyet, Turkey's Ambassador to the US, Nabi Sensoy said that the so-called Armenian

genocide resolution will come up on the agenda of the House of Representatives but unless President Bush signs it, it will not become legislation. Hurriyet reports that US House of Representatives member Adam Schiff announced that he is going to present the House with a draft on the Armenian genocide issue. Schiff also said that "the US should recognize the genocide" and he is "very hopeful that the draft will pass the congress under the new leadership."

Meanwhile, Yasemin Congar reports in Milliyet that the Washington based International Armenian Politics Research Group is arranging a conference in Yerevan on January 13-14, to discuss the economic and social results of the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. Experts from eight different countries, including Turkey, will attend the conference.

TV News:
(NTV, 7.00 A.M.)

Domestic News

- The first cabinet meeting of the new year to be held Monday will discuss combating PKK terrorism and the mechanism of special US-Turkey anti-terrorism envoys.
- President Sezer is to pay an official visit to Italy on January 8-10 to meet with his Italian counterpart Giorgio Napolitano. Sezer will also attend the official opening of the exhibition "Turkey:

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"7,000 Years of History" at the Italian Presidential Palace.

- Turkish Finance and Tourism ministries continue work on the "Spanish model" for sale of assets to foreigners.
- Education Minister Huseyin Celik said 40,000 new teachers will be appointed in 2007.

International News

- President Bush's new Iraq plan envisages deployment of 20,000 extra troops to Iraq as well as the allotment of USD 1 billion for employment of Iraqis.
- Nancy Pelosi, the first woman Speaker of the US Congress, warned to cut Congressional funds if President Bush proposes deploying additional troops to Iraq.
- According to The Independent, the "lion's share" of Iraqi oil will go to the United States and Britain.
- The Observer reports all British nationals visiting the United States will have their fingerprints taken and archived.

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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